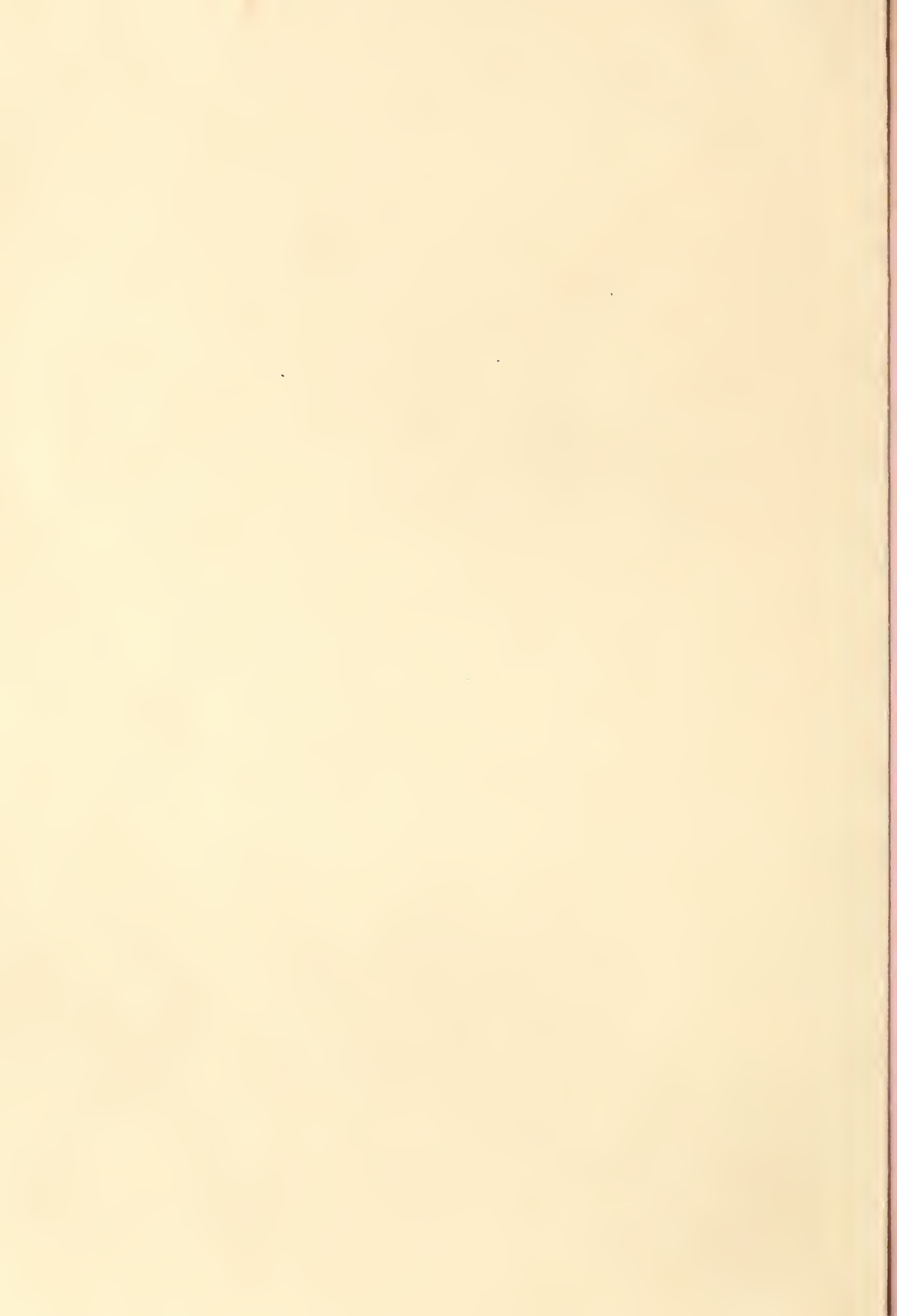


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Radio Service

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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, May 10, 1934

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Home Sewing Conveniences Without Cost." Information from the Extension Service and the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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Home sewing, particularly dressmaking, has been on the increase these last few years. Pattern companies will tell you that. So will clerks at dress-goods or notions departments. And if you go to meetings of home demonstration clubs in any state in the Union, you'll probably hear how popular the study of making-over clothes has been, especially during the past year. You see, women have been meeting the hard times and thin pocketbooks with their fingers. Yes, I mean fingers -- literally. What they couldn't buy, they just made for themselves. When they lacked money for new, ready-made clothes, they went ahead and made-over old ones.

Women's clubs have made a specialty of clothing clinics. The members bring their old clothes to these clinics. Then they discuss how to fix over old garments. And then they clean, repair, press and remodel under the guidance of a clothing specialist. Such get-togethers on a common problem have saved a good deal of money for families all over the country. And they have been pleasant socially as well as profitable.

To help in this good work for emergency times, the Bureau of Home Economics at Washington put out some leaflets on clothing economy with helpful make-over hints. And the Bureau clothing specialists made up an exhibit of children's clothes from the cast-off clothes of their elders.

The exhibit proves at a glance that hand-me-downs may be quite as good-looking as new clothes, provided they are properly planned and made. This collection of made-overs is on the road now, visiting groups of mothers in different states who are interested in remodeling for their youngsters. By the way, you might like to know that your club, whether it is a mother's club or a home demonstration group or anything else -- your club can have a visit from this exhibit, if you'll write and arrange a date with the Bureau of Home Economics at Washington, D. C. The exhibit will come free. All you have to do is to give it good care and pay its traveling expenses.

But I'm wandering from the story I wanted to tell you today. I wanted to tell you what women of Virginia did last year on this problem of home dressmaking. They had an idea that many people dislike sewing because it is such confused and disorderly work, generally carried on upstairs and downstairs and all around the house. You know how sewing goes in most homes. You cut out the pattern on the dining room table. Then you have to run upstairs to find the pins and needles and thread for basting. Then you sew it on the machine. Then you run back

downstairs and press it on the kitchen ironing board, and so on. And, all the time, you have to stop and hunt here and there for scissors or thimble or something else. No wonder dressmaking gives many women the "fidgets." Think how most of us would dislike cooking if we had to do it all over the house this way!

Well, these women in Virginia decided to make the dressmaking job pleasanter and easier for themselves by organizing a convenient sewing center where they would have their utensils on hand. Many of them built -- or had their sons or husbands build -- portable sewing cabinets to stand by their sewing chairs. These cabinets look like large wooden suitcases, that can open and stand upright, and have handles on top to carry them. They are like large flat wooden boxes, hinged together on one side and having a catch on the other. Shelves and pockets inside are fitted up with sewing equipment -- pegs to hold spools of thread; corks for thimbles; shelves for pincushions; and button jars and needles; hooks for scissors; pockets for paper patterns, unfinished garments and pressing pads -- everything in its own place and all in easy reach of the dressmaker's chair. A suitcase sewing arrangement much like this has been very popular also with the women in California.

I mentioned a low, comfortable chair, didn't I? That's a point that these Virginia women considered important for comfortable sewing. Another point they made was the matter of arms on the chair. I don't know whether you like to sew in an arm chair or not, but they agreed that saving off the arms often made the chair easier for the job of sewing. A chair that fits you, that you can sit in for hours without getting tired, a chair that suits the job you are doing needn't cost a cent. You can cut it down yourself. But it may make a lot of difference in your comfort when you are making clothes for the family.

Another sewing convenience that needn't cost anything is good light. I don't need to mention to any woman who does her own sewing how valuable an asset good eyesight is. And the way to save your eyes, of course, is to plan for good light, to have your sewing corner in a window where you have plenty of daylight coming in over your left shoulder. I say "coming in from the left," but that rule applies only to right-handed people. If you happen to be left-handed, you'll want the light to your right.

The idea is to have clear light, never a shadow, on your work. As for evening sewing, there you'll need a good lamp which gives off plenty of light to prevent eye-strain even when you are sewing a fine seam, but also protects your eyes from glare by a good shade. Women in all parts of the country have been making their own lamp-shades with great success lately. Homemade paper shades, colored and glazed with shellac, may look like the most expensive parchment shades, and may cost next to nothing. Another case of making your own. Even if you sew by a kerosene lamp, one of these homemade shades may save your eyes and add to the attractiveness of your room. By the way, a friend of mine suggests that if you are matching colors, say, matching the thread to the material, you'll be wise to do that by daylight, or by the light of a daylight electric bulb.

Well, next week I'll continue with more little true stories of the way women have been improving their homes at little or no cost.

